

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 1, 2011

WASHINGTON, DC - The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) is now accepting applications for its 2011-2012 Joseph R. Crapa Fellowship Program. The application deadline is April 18, 2011.

The funded fellowships are available to select individuals with exceptional records of accomplishment and/or outstanding records of academic achievement in fields relevant to the work of USCIRF, including but not limited to, religious freedom and related human rights, foreign policy, international law, and security. USCIRF welcomes applicants from the U.S. congressional community, government agencies (including the State Department, U.S. Agency for International Development, and military and intelligence agencies), academia, nongovernmental organizations, think tanks, and other relevant fields. Current and previous Crapa fellows include:

- [Mr. Ali Al-Ahmed \(2010-2011 Crapa Fellow\)](#)
- [Ms. Geraldine Fagan \(2010-2011 Crapa Fellow\)](#)
- [Mr. Ziya Meral \(2010-2011 Crapa Fellow\)](#)
- [Dr. Timothy Samuel Shah \(2009-2010 Fellow\)](#)
- [Dr. Maryann Cusimano Love \(2009-2010 Fellow\)](#)
- [Dr. Ahmed Subhy Mansour \(2009-2010 Fellow\)](#)
- [Ms. Liora Danan \(2009-2010 Fellow\)](#)

Citizens of any country may apply. Non-U.S. citizens without permanent resident status must obtain an H-1B nonimmigrant visa, which USCIRF will sponsor. The term of each fellowship will be determined by the nature of the fellow's project, but will not exceed 12 months. It is expected that fellows will spend a significant portion of their fellowship in residence at the USCIRF offices in Washington, DC. The preferable start date for the fellowship is September 2011 or soon thereafter.

Applicants for a Crapa Fellowship should submit a proposal detailing the parameters of the project they intend to pursue during their time as a Crapa Fellow. This proposal should include:

- detailed budget;
- a succinct statement of the area of intended study;
- the relevance of the study to the field of religious freedom;
- the format and timing of the product they propose to produce; and
- a brief overview of relevant existing work in the area of proposed study.

In addition, applicants should send a cover letter, resume, writing sample, and the names of three professional references USCIRF can contact directly. Applications should be submitted electronically to: [crapafellows@uscirf.gov](mailto:crapafellows@uscirf.gov). Projects can be country focused or thematic and should seek to enhance and expand the policy work of USCIRF. Country proposals should focus on countries USCIRF recommends as “countries of particular concern,” or CPCs, and/or those countries on USCIRF’s Watch List. For thematic proposals, below is a list of sample topics of interest to USCIRF. This list is not exhaustive and is only meant to provide some examples of possible areas for fellowship research:

- The role of religion and religious freedom in counterinsurgencies and in combating religious extremism.
- The developing parameters of religious freedom under international law, including an analysis of significant trends and strategies to impact the development in positive directions.
- The impact of religious freedom in advancing the rights of women.
- Government-sponsored intolerant materials and its impact on religious freedom.
- Utilizing U.S. assistance effectively to promote and advance religious freedom.
- Identifying the state's obligations to overcome impunity for abuses of religious freedom and related rights.
- Confronting hate crimes related to religion while respecting freedom of expression and freedom of religion.

Before joining USCIRF, Joseph Crapa spent a year as chief of staff to Sen. Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.). Earlier, he held legislative and public affairs positions with the Agency for International Development and the Environmental Protection Agency. He was chief of staff for Rep. David R. Obey (D-Wis.) from 1987 to 1997, the last three years as Democratic counsel to the House Appropriations Committee. He served as USCIRF’s Executive Director from 2002 until his untimely death in 2007.

A committed public servant, Mr. Crapa guided USCIRF with consummate skill, combining a keen sense of public service with an abiding commitment to advancing the cause of religious freedom. He helped USCIRF amplify its voice and broaden its reach.

USCIRF is an independent, bipartisan U.S. federal government commission. USCIRF Commissioners are appointed by the President and the leadership of both political parties in the Senate and the House of Representatives. USCIRF’s principal responsibilities are to review the facts and circumstances of violations of religious freedom internationally and to make policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State, and Congress.

To interview a USCIRF Commissioner, contact Tom Carter, Communications Director at [tcarter@uscirf.gov](mailto:tcarter@uscirf.gov), or (202) 523-3257.